

What is Claimed Is:

1. A method for processing image data, comprising:
 - obtaining image data;
 - automatically processing the image data using a set of directives to identify a target object in the image data and process the image data according to a specified protocol; and
 - automatically generating one or more images of the target object based on one or more of the directives; and
 - storing the one or more generated images in a digital archive.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the image data comprises DICOM-formatted image data.
- 15 3. The method of claim 2, wherein automatically processing the image data using a set of directives comprises processing meta-data in DICOM fields to identify the target object .
- 20 4. The method of claim 1, wherein automatically processing the image data comprises segmenting the target object using processing parameters specified by one or more of the directives.
- 25 5. An imaging system, comprising:
 - an image processing module for automatically processing image data using a set of directives to identify a target object in the image data and process the image data according to a specified protocol; and
 - a rendering module for automatically generating one or more images of the target object based on one or more of the directives; and
 - a digital archive for storing the one or more generated images.
- 30 6. The system of claim 5, wherein the image data comprises DICOM-formatted image data.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein the imaging processing module extracts and processes meta-data in DICOM fields of the image data to identify the target object .

5 8. The system of claim 5, wherein the image processing module directs a segmentation module to segment the target object using processing parameters specified by one or more of the directives.